

'Supermart' Sells Thousands

Scientific Studies Spur Monkey Business Boom

By George Eagle

Washington Post Staff Writer

If supermonkey ever comes to the supermart, it may well happen up in Simpsonville.

That's in Howard County, about 25 miles north of Washington, and in a cinder block building on Freetown Road, Arthur A. King works to condition "quality primates" for the big time in scientific research.

When the white one-floor

building was ready a year ago, King set out to establish a "supermarket" where research groups and firms could acquire the best in "Old and New World monkeys, baboons and chimpanzees."

That's the promise of JEJA, Inc., of which King is president. The firm's name is made up of first initials of the four King brothers who are partners: Julius, 52, of 61 Rhode Island ave. ne.; Eugene, 47, of Catonsville, Md.; James, 45, whose home is in front of the "supermarket," and Arthur, 34, of 3409 Newton st., Mount Rainier.

Arthur manages the business, which is, simply, selling primates for research. JEJA does not deal in pets and sells only to bonafide research organizations.

They're No. 3

Arthur King says there are four other such primate marts in the Nation—in New York, Michigan, Florida and California. He figures JEJA is only No. 3 in the business, but even that means thousands of monkeys and an occasional baboon and chimp coming in and going out of the white building a year.

Yesterday about 125 monkeys, mostly rhesus monkeys from India weighing 4 to 6 pounds, were in stock in their individual cages. The inventory was comparatively low because the "grant season" has just passed. Many research grants have just been announced, and almost everybody in the science world wants monkeys.

Rhesus monkeys go for

about \$55 apiece. Prices range from \$35 up to \$750 for the prized chimp, which is much wanted for behavioral studies.

From time to time there are squirrel monkeys from South America, stump-tail monkeys from Malaya and Thailand, pig-tail monkeys from Thailand and cynomolgus monkeys from the Philippines.

Get Special Food

After getting shaped up on special feeds, apples and bananas, they go to government and private groups for experimental surgery, drug testing and psychological studies. A big use at the moment is testing for malaria, an outgrowth of stepped-up U.S. operations in South Vietnam.

The monkeys are well cared for in eight animal rooms in the 4000-square-foot building, kept at 72 to 76 degrees and

50 per cent humidity, for it is in the King brothers' interest to have healthy, lively monkeys for sale. They are tested for tuberculosis and flushed of parasites during the minimal 30-day stay in Simpsonville.

Arthur King says there are 25 bills in Congress having to do with control of how research animals are acquired and sold. "I think there should be some controls," he says, "but the controls should be reasonable. What are you going to use for research? People?"

Isolated on Arrival

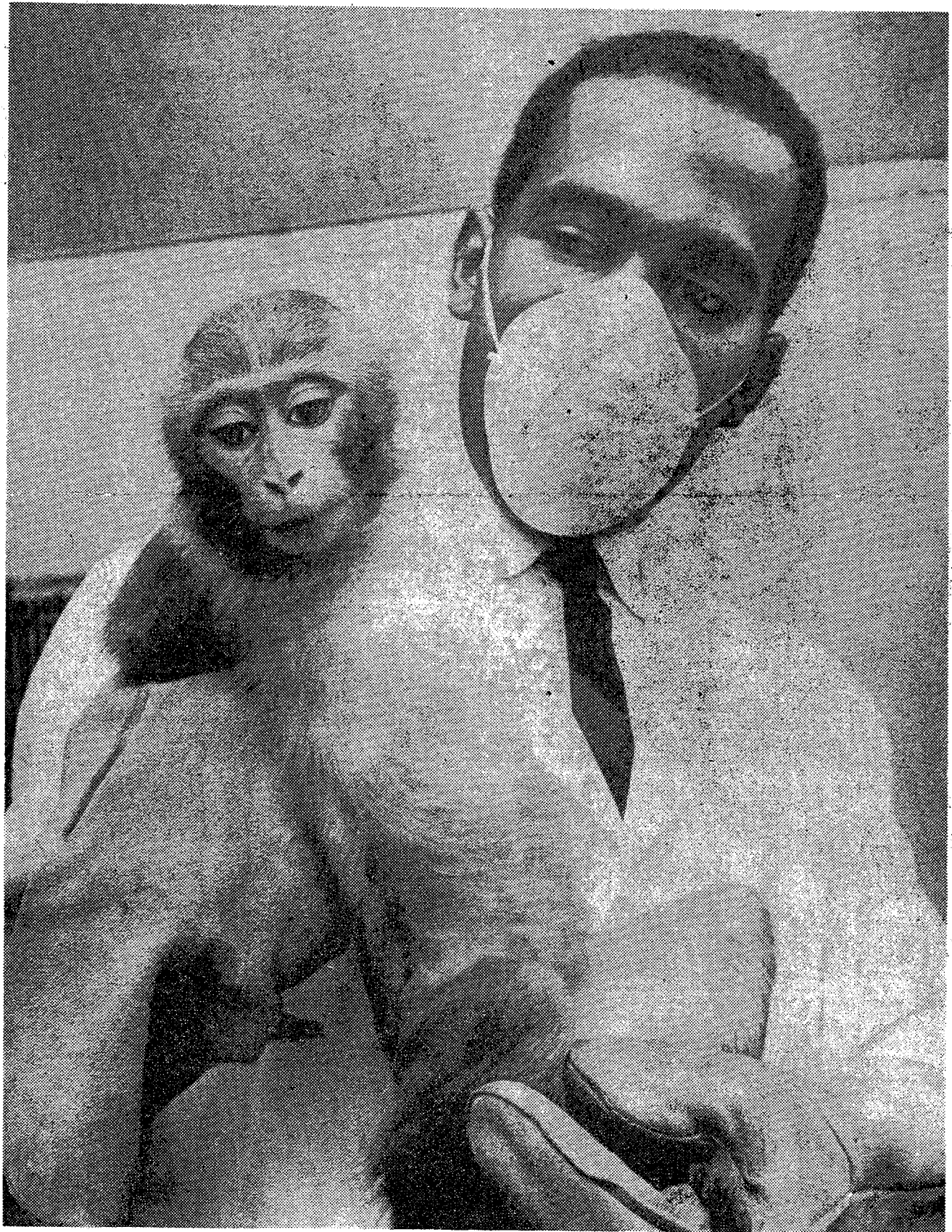
The primates are flown in lots of 50 and 1000 to Friendship, Dulles or National Airports by exporters on cabled order from King. He or an employee picks up the shipment with a climate-controlled delivery truck and brings the

animals to the JEJA housing. There they are quarantined under the firm's procedures, though King says quarantine is not required by the U.S. Government.

King, who has an animal husbandry degree from the University of Maryland, got his idea for JEJA while working at Walter Reed Medical Center. He recognized an increasingly heavy demand for research animals in the Washington area and to the south. He talked his brothers—two are schoolteachers and the third is a paperhanger—into making it a joint venture.

Previously, Arthur King worked at Beltsville Agricultural Research Center and spent two years in Vietnam in the mid-'50s teaching refugees about keeping animals. He also has worked on animal husbandry in Trinidad and Liberia.

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FOR SALE—Arthur A. King holds one of the primates offered at his Howard County “supermarket” for researchers.

By Bob Burchette, Staff Photographer